

**THE**  
**Journal of the Assam Research Society.**  
(KĀMARUPA ANUSANDHAN SAMITI.)

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Vol VII	JULY 1939	No 2.
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Published by the Kamarupa Anusandhan Samiti, Gauhati.

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Printed by Dilu Rai at the Nepal Press Shillong

*Annual Subscription Rs. 4.]*

*[ Single Copy Rs. 1*

## CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
PRE-HISTORIC CULTURE IN ASSAM ( <i>By K. L. Barua</i> ) <i>Contd. From Page 18 Vol. VII.</i>	35
DR. SHAHIDULLA ON THE ASSMESE LANGUAGE ( <i>By Srijud Devananda Bharali, B. A.</i> )	41
LUI-PĀDA AND MATSYENDRA NĀTH ( <i>By R. M. Nath, B.E., A.E.S.</i> )	48
WERE THERE INDIAN COLONISTS FROM ASSAM IN INDO-CHINA ? ( <i>By K. L. Barua.</i> )	57
A CORRECTION ( <i>By the Editor</i> )	63
REVIEWS ( <i>Periodicals.</i> )	65

# PREHSTORIC CULTURE IN ASSAM

(BY K. L. BARUA.)

*Contd. from page 18 Vol. VII.*

Dr. Hutton has, in his recent addresses and contributions, referred to several cultural parallels between Assam and Oceania. This had, in the past, been considered as due to migration of culture, if not of peoples, from Oceania at a very early period when Australia and the other contiguous islands were connected with Southern Asia by land. This is how the terms Australoid, Austro-Asiatic and Austric originated and these terms, in a racial or linguistic sense or both, came to be applied to the Pre-Mediterraneans who spoke the Munda, Mon-Khmer and allied languages and occupied various parts of India. In this article I have attributed to the [Mon-Khmer speaking people of Assam several distinctive cultural contributions such as megalithic burials, neolithic shouldered hoe, terraced rice cultivation, iron-smelting and matriarchy, all indicative of advanced culture and civilization.] Mr. S. C. Roy, the editor of "Man in India", holds a different view that it was the Mediterraneans, or Proto-Dravidians as he calls them, who first introduced the megalithic culture, iron-smelting and the serpent-cult in India, that a branch of these Mediterraneans having first mixed with the Proto-Australoids in the river-valleys of Northern and Eastern India passed through Assam and Burma and formed in Indonesia the so-called Nesiot race, since submerged, and that some of these Proto-Dravidians or Mediterraneans came to be known as *Asuras* who occupied Chota-Nagpur as well as Assam at one time. All these speculations seem to have originated since the discovery of traces of the famous Indus Valley civilization. It seems to have become a fashion now to ascribe the origin of culture and civilization in India to these Mediterraneans, the supposed dwellers in

Harappa and Mohenjodaro, in the third millennium B. C. just as it was the fashion, some twentyfive years ago, before the explorations in Sind and the Punjab, to think that when the Vedic Aryans came to India they found the indigenous people to be all black, noseless cannibals who were called by various opprobrious names.

A rude shock has been given to these speculations by the discovery made by Hevesy that the Munda languages are of European origin belonging to the Finno-Ugrian stock. Scholars like Professors Valdi, Flor. and Schrader admit the genetic relationship between Munda and Finno-Ugrian and the latest enthusiastic convert to this theory is Dr. Bonnerjea who actually went to Budapest, in Hungary, to study Finno-Ugrian linguistics. (10). Dr. Hutton no doubt regards Hevesy's repudiation of Munda and Mon-Khmer connections as being entirely contradictory to the evidence of cultural relationship between these two peoples. He says that "if Hevesy is right about the relation of the Munda to the Finno-Ugrian group the older philologists were also right about its relation to the Mon-Khmer group." (11) According to Hevesy the Dravidian (Mediterranean) preceded the Munda in India but Dr. Hutton is opposed to this view. He rightly holds that "the displacement of Munda as the earlier by Dravidian as the later is indicated not only by the present geographical distribution in India of the two languages but also by the influence which Dravidian languages have apparently exercised directly on Aryan languages in Northern and Western India."

Dr. Bonnerjea has pointed out that even cultural connections can be traced between the Finno-Ugrians on the one hand and the Mundas as well as the Mon-Khmers on the other. For

(10) *Indian Culture* Vol. IV, pp. 621—632.

(11) Dr. Hutton's address on "Mon and Munda in India and beyond."

instance, Ophiolatry (serpent-worship) is said to have been prevalent among the Mundas as well as the Finno-Ugrians. It is of course one of the most outstanding cultural items of the Mon-Khmer Khasis which still persists in nooks and corners of the Khasi Hills in spite of mass conversions to Christianity. The snake-cult was however widely prevalent in most parts of India, particularly Southern India and Eastern India including Bihar, Bengal and Assam. \* Traces of this cult have been found in Harappa also but, as pointed out by Dr. Hutton, the Austro-Asiatic-Finno-Ugrians clearly preceded the Mediterraneans in India and therefore ophiolatry is to be put down as the distinctive cultural contribution of the former. Then, according to the mythology of the Voguls (one of the Finno-Ugrian tribes), mankind was derived from a swan and Dr. Bonnerji points out that according to Munda belief man originated from a swan's egg. It may be pointed out, in this connection, that, as stated in some of the copper-plate inscriptions of Orissa, the Bhanja dynasty was *Andajavamsa pravaba* (originating from an egg). <sup>(12)</sup> I need hardly refer here to the geographical, racial, cultural and linguistic affinity between the peoples of Chhota-Nagpur and the Orissa states. It seems, on the whole, that people speaking languages of the same family—whether we call this family Austro-Asiatic or Finno-

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\* Recent archaeological explorations in Bihar have revealed the ancient temple of *Mani Naga* on the site of Rājagriha the famous capital of Magadha which, as stated in the Mahabharata, used to be protected by the snake goddess. The explorations also revealed the existence of a sculpture representing a row of *Nagas* with hoods and several female figures of *Nāginis* with an inscription at the bottom in characters of the second century A. D. which reads :—*Bhagvati Sumagadhā*. Perhaps this was the name of the protecting snake-goddess. The *Manasā Puja* observed in Bengal and Sylhet and the *Māroi Puja* observed in the Assam Valley, till almost recent times, indicate the prevalence of the snake-cult in these places also.—K. L. B.

(12) Indian Historical Quarterly Vol. XIII (1937) pp. 418—431.

Ugrian or "Finno-Ugrian-Austro-Asiatic" as suggested by Hutton—and who had a totemic religion and a megalithic culture, once covered a very large part of our globe of which India is only a patch.

Elsewhere in India the Dravidian-speaking Mediterraneans may have displaced the Finno-Ugrian-Austro-Asiatic speakers but in Assam it was the Mongoloid Tibeto-Burmans who displaced the Mon-Khmer speakers. All these displacements must have taken place during prehistoric times. Chronologically we can perhaps safely make the Tibeto-Burmans the direct successors of the Khasis, Syntengs and perhaps also other tribes like the Mikirs. Hutton points out that not only clear traces of Mon-Khmer culture are to be found in the Naga Hills but that in physique the Khasis and the Manipuris—neighbours of the Nagas—are very much alike while there is much similarity between Khasi and Kacha-Naga customs. It seems that subsequent to the arrival of the various tribes of Tibeto-Burmans there must have been a mingling of races, languages and culture in Assam. The Bodo tribes, occupying the plains, gradually built up a distinctive culture of their own. They perhaps came in contact with the Mediterranean Pundras of northern and central Bengal who may have had the same chalcolithic civilization as that of the dwellers of the Indus Valley. This cultural connection seems to be indicated by the worship of the *Burā Devatā*, the chief of the fourteen *devatās* of the ancient Bodo kings of the Kopili Valley. It appears that this *Bura Devatā* was a horned god like the one depicted in a Mohenjodaro seal and which Sir John Marshall claims as the prototype of *Śiva Paśupati*. The Bodos first came under the civilizing influence of the Mediterraneans, then of the Alpines and lastly of the Vedic Aryans. By that time however they had already passed the prehistoric stage as scattered accounts of their kings and kingdoms in the Assam Valley as well as Northern Bengal are to be found from the Purāṇas and the

**Mahabhārata.** The Bodos are still the most numerous tribal people settled throughout the Assam Valley and their occupation of this Valley, for a very long time, prior to the arrival of the Alpines or the Aryans, is indicated by the Bodo names of places and of nearly all the important tributaries of the Brahmaputra from the Dihong to the Kartiyā (Karatoyā).

It is difficult now to ascertain correctly the various cultural items of the Bodo tribes who settled in the plains of the Assam Valley and Northern Bengal and who latterly came into contact first with the Mediterraneans, then with the Alpines and lastly with the Vedic Aryan colonists in North-Eastern India. It seems that by the time they met the Aryans—say about 1000 B. C. if not earlier—they were settled agriculturists who grew both the broadcasted and the transplanted varieties of paddy and who very likely knew the art of irrigation by the *dong* system as well as that of weaving garments not only from grasses and fibres but also from cotton which they grew and from silk, both wild and domesticated. In fact it is not at all improbable that the art of sericulture was introduced into North-Eastern India, many centuries before the advent of the Vedic Aryans, by the forefathers of the Bodos. According to Sir George Watt the practice of rearing mulberry silk-worm was introduced into North-Western India, notably Kashmere, possibly from the direction of Khotan and into Assam and Bengal across the Chinese frontier. It is for this reason that in ancient Indo-Aryan literature *Pat* silk is mentioned as *China patta*, *Cināmsuka* and *Cina-bhumija*. According to Rai Bahadur Jogend Chandra Rai Vidyanidhi M.A., no word conveying the sense of silk occurs in the Vedic literature. (12). It appears however from the *Arthasāstra* of Kauṭilya that as early as the fourth century B. C. the Assam Valley was famous not so much for its *Pat* silk but for its wild and semi-wild silk such as *Mooga* and *Eri*. These two varieties must have been rear-

ed in Assam several centuries before the time of Kautilya, otherwise they could not have been so well-known during his time throughout Northern India, as the product of Assam obtained from its trade-centre Suvarnakudya which has been indentified with modern Sonkudihā. In the *Kiskindhyā kāṇḍa* of the Ramayana it is stated that one travelling towards the east has to pass through Magadha (South-Bihar), Anga (Bhagalpur), Pundra (Northern Bengal) and then the *Koṣa-kāṇḍānam bhūmī* (country of the silk-worm rearers). To the east of Pundra, that is, in Prāgjyotiṣa sericulture was so widely practised in ancient times that it came to be known as the country of the sericulturists. Even up to this time rearing of the *Eri* silk-worm, spinning of *Eri* thread and weaving of *Eri* silk cloths are favourite occupations of the Bodo tribes of the Assam Valley. The *Arthasāstra* mentions also manufacture of garments from grasses called *Khaupra* and *Virana* (perhaps *Birinā*). It also makes mention of a kind of fermented liquor then made in Assam. This liquor was known as *Prasannā* and in making it the barks and fruits of a tree called *Putraka* were used. We can attribute this industry also to the Bodos who must have been then in an advanced state of culture due to intercourse with the Mediterraneans and the Alpines.

We may therefore summarise thus :—The earliest pre-historic culture in Assam, so far known, was not a paleolithic but a neolithic culture spread throughout the length and breadth of the province as indicated by the wide distribution of neolithic celts. We do not know who the original authors of this culture were. Perhaps long ages after, came a people much more advanced in culture who introduced the shouldered neolithic hoe, terraced rice cultivation, megalithic burials, ophiolatry and matriarchy. These people began with a neolithic culture but latterly they acquired the knowledge of iron-smelting. We do not know whether they developed this art themselves or borrowed it from others. They were speakers



of a language which belonged to a family very widely distributed all over the world. In course of time however they were displaced and submerged, in most places, by hordes of new-comers from Tibet, Burma and Yunan. These new-comers may have been actually inferior to the Mon-Khmer speakers in culture when they debouched from the hills on the North and settled on the plains of Northern Bengal and the Assam Valley but gradually they came under the cultural influence, first of the Mediterranean Pundras of Bengal, then of the Alpines and lastly of the Aryans by which time the historic period began.

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## DR. SHAHIDULLA ON THE ASSAMESE LANGUAGE.

(BY SRIJUT DEVANANDA BHARĀLI, B. A.)

The Educational Exhibition held at Jorhat in the last week of February—the first of its kind in Assam for the organization of which the Educational authorities should be congratulated—afforded an excellent opportunity to the people of Jorhat to come into contact with several distinguished scholars who attended it and delivered some learned lectures. Mr. S. C. Gupta, Inspector of Schools, Surma Valley, deserves our gratitude for the lucidity with which he explained the Wardha scheme of education, while Mr. A. Bose, of Calcutta, discussed the problem of driving illiteracy from the country with commendable skill and originality. The lecture of Dr. Shahidulla on the history of the Assamese language, was of absorbing interest to the educated section of the audience. The following is the substance of the lecture which was delivered in Bengali :—

The origins of a language begin to take shape in the dim past which history can not reach. Some 15,000 years ago,

there lived in the Southern part of Russia, a race of people who subsequently came to be known as the Aryans. Several of their branches migrated to different parts of Europe, while one of them came to central Asia and thence to Persia. From Persia they came across Afghanistan till they reached the Valley of the Sind where they met a race of people who were far advanced in various arts. They were dark-skinned and flat-nosed (Anāsā). The Vedas make mention of many a sanguinary battle that the Aryans had to fight before they conquered these children of the soil, razed their towns, skinned some of them alive and made slaves of others. After dominating the Punjab the Aryans carried their conquering arms eastward, down the Gangetic trough, until Videgha Mathava planted the banner of Aryan culture on the bank of the Sadānira or the Karatoyā, as it is now called. The language of these Aryans got twisted in the different countries that they traversed and this gave rise to the different *Prākṛits* in India. The Aryans settled in Assam about the beginning of the Christian era passing through Bengal. Assamese and Bengali are sister languages being derived from the Eastern *Prākṛit*. Assamese words and grammatical forms are to be found in old Bengali as represented by the *Śrī Kṛiṣṇa Kīrtan* and the *Śūnya Twāna*. In old Bengali both ঐ and ই were used as endings in verbs in the first person; the only difference being that the ঐ was used in the singular and ই in the plural number. Therefore ঐ goes with আমি and ই goes with আমরা (we). The aphorisms of Dāk are not so old as they are often thought to be. They are current in Bengal, Assam and Orissa and, as Dāk means any sage person, their sources may be different. Srijut Kahram Medhi of Gauhati and Srijut Devananda Bharali of Jorhat, who have written on the history of the Assamese language, are mistaken in going to derive some Assamese words from languages outside India. All Assamese words and forms must be derived from the *Prākṛits* or Sanskrit or from the surrounding non-Aryan dialects. To go beyond that or to pre-Vedic times is

unscientific. Thus Assamese মেকুৰী (cat) is derived from Mikir মেকুৰী, Assamese জুই is derived from Sanskrit জ্বতি. This last word as well as the Assamese word ভৰি (leg) occurs also in the *Śūnya Purāna*.

The above, in brief, is the substance of what Dr. Shahidulla said on the subject. \* His remarks about Dāk and his sayings provoked a mild criticism in which it was pointed out that the very fact that these sayings are current in three adjoining provinces testifies to their hoary antiquity. This is also supported by the pre-Vaiṣṇavo nature of their contents. Moreover, they must have originated from one source; otherwise how could the sayings, current in three provinces, agree not merely in substance but word by word? Owing to the short time-limit prescribed by the President of the meeting, Mr. Blanner Hesette, M. L. A., the discussion could not be lengthened. We are glad that the learned Doctor takes a keen interest in the history of the Assamese language. We are naturally attracted towards him and tempted to point out certain misconceptions which were apparent from his speech. Take, for example, the time of Aryan settlement in ancient Kāmarūpa or Prāgjyotiṣa which, according to the lecturer, could not have been earlier than the beginning of the Christian era. In course of his lecture however the Doctor averred that under Videga Mathava the Aryans conquered the country up to the Sadānira, a fact mentioned in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* which is assigned by Sanskrit scholars to 1000 B. C. Are we then to believe that the Aryans, after coming as far as the Karatoyā in 1000 B. C., took another 1000 years to cross that river? Common sense will say that they must have crossed the river

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\* We do not remember to have seen any report of Dr. Shahidulla's lecture in the newspapers. If there be any mistake or omission in this summary, given by Mr. Bharali, we would gladly publish any correction communicated to us by Dr. Shahidulla or any one responsible for arranging the lecture. [ Ed. J. A. R. S. ]

and made extensive settlements on the opposite side i. e. Kāmarūpa, in the next fifty years. If we believe the *Śatapatha Brahmana* then Aryan settlement must have taken place in Kāmarūpa in the ninth century B. C. even if we discredit the repeated references to Prāgjyotiṣa, Naraka and Bhagadatta in the two epics. These Aryan names could not have been applied to the country and its kings, so many centuries before the Christian era, if Aryan settlement in the country actually began with the commencement of the Christian era. \*

Next, as to the relationship between the two languages Bengali and Assamese, the learned Doctor said that they were two daughters of the same mother. This is only partly true for vast differences exist between Assamese and modern Bengali even in grammar. They agree however in the construction of sentences and, to some extent, in vocabulary. The fact is that the language that prevailed over a large part of Bengal in old times and which is miscalled old Bengali, was nothing but Kāmarūpi which is now represented by modern Assamese. Dr. Shahidulla himself admitted, in his lecture, that old writings in Bengal, like the *Śrī Kṛṣṇa Kīrtan* and the *Śūnya Purāna*, abound in Assamese words and grammatical forms. That the *Śrī Kṛṣṇa Kīrtan* is more Assamese than modern Bengali has been abundantly proved in pages 127 to 132 of the *Assamiyā Bhāṣār Moulik Vicār*. From the literature of old Bengal one can clearly see that there was a time when the Assamese (Kāmarūpi) language prevailed almost throughout Bengal and was in contact with Oriya with which it bears marked similarity. That is also the reason why the sayings of

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\* It has been shown in the preceding issue of this Journal (Vol. VII No. 1 pp. 24—54) that villages and rivers in Prāgjyotiṣa, having Aryan names, such as Suvarṇakudya, Aśokagrāma, Lauhitya and Antarvati, were known to Kauṭilya, the famous author of the *Arthāśāstra*, in the fourth century B. C. There is therefore no doubt that a cultured Aryan-speaking people had settled in Assam many centuries before the beginning of the Christian era. (Ed. J. A. R. S.)

Dāk, originating in Kāmarūpa, found their way to Bengal and thence to Orissa at a very early date. With the influx of people from Bihar, Orissa and other places into Bengal in subsequent times and owing to the revival of Sanskrit learning a new language with abundance of Sanskrit and Persian vocabulary and development of new grammatical forms, with predominant leaning towards cerebral and palatal pronunciations, took its rise in Bengal and gradually submerged and displaced the old language—a process which is still at work in the western Assam Valley. Modern Bengali has not grown out of the language of old Bengal but has supplanted it. In order to prove that Assamese and Bengali are sister languages Dr. Shahidulla argued that the two forms কৰোঁ and কৰি, in the first person of a verb, existed in Proto-Bengali : one in the singular and the other in the plural tense and, after bifurcation, the singular form was adopted by Assamese and the plural form was adopted by Bengali. This is however not supported by old literature, for we find in the *caryāpadas* many passages in which the ই (eg কৰি, ঘৰিলি) is associated with the singular pronoun মোঞ. In the *caryāpadas* the other form ie. ওঁ (as in কৰোঁ) seldom occurs but in the *Śrī Kṛiṣṇa Kīrtan* and *Gopī Chānder gān* this ওঁ preponderates. It appears that the ই ending (as in কৰি etc.) came to Bengal from Bihar. It occurs in Vidāypati's writings and is still current in Maithili and Bhojpuri. The ওঁ, on the other hand, belonged to Assam. It previously prevailed in Bengal. Afterwards there was struggle between the two forms in Bengal and in the end ওঁ gave way.

Dr. Shahidulla thinks that the Assamese Nom. Case-ending এ is derived from Sanskrit एन (ena). That is, he said, the reason why it always goes with a transitive verb. But in the writings of Mādhava Kandali we find বাঘৰে বসি আছে and in old Oriya কুমারে উপজিলা. We are therefore inclined to think that the root of this might be something else. In modern Assamese also the Nom. case takes the এ ending before the verbs হাঁহে and কান্দে.

The Assamese word মেকুৰী is not derived from Mikir but the reverse in the case for this word is not to be found in any of the other dialects allied to Mikir.

Now as to the Doctor's dictum that it is unscientific to go to pre-Vedic times and to languages beyond India for the derivation of some Assamese words let us examine the case as presented by these words. In all the Aryan languages of India we find that the words for fire is আগুন, আগ etc. all different forms of the same word অগ্নি which has been current since the time of the Vedas. In Assam however the Aryans instead of using that common expression adopted a new word জুই (দ্রাতি). Take another word দক্ষিণ which is in common use and which means "right" as opposed to "left" and from which দাহিন, দান, ডান etc. are derived. In Assam the Aryans, instead of using this word, adopted "মৌ". In the same way the verb দুহ (to milk) used throughout Aryan India has given place to খিৰা in Assam. All these Assamese words are derived from Sanskrit; Yet the change from অগ্নি to দ্রাতি, দক্ষ to ক্ষম and from দুহ to খিৰ and so on requires an explanation.

The explanation advanced by the two Assamese writers on the history of the language, mentioned by Dr. Shahidulla, is that the Aryans who first came to Kāmarūpa and settled there were not the Vedic Aryans who were used to the words অগ্নি, দক্ষিণ etc. and who came to Eastern India later.\* That the Aryans came to India in different batches, separated by long intervals of time, is admitted by scholars. That the language of the earlier batch would be sometimes absorbed but often obliterated by that of the subsequent arrivals, except in outlying corners like Assam or Kashmere, is only natural. This, by the way, also explains the rather unexpected similarity of

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\* The latest theory is that the immigrants who first brought the Aryan language and culture to Eastern India were not the Aryans but a batch of the Alpines from Iran whom some scholars mistook for a batch of non-Vedic Aryans. (Ed. J. A. R. S.)

words and grammatical forms between Assamese and the languages in the North-Western frontier. Such similarities, though absent in the intervening countries, may even be traced to regions beyond the confines of India. The two writers have mentioned some of these similarities. When we say that the Assamese words আই (mother) is to be found in the Bhili and Tarimukhi, dialects near Gazerat and in the Tarwali Pasai, Kohistani, Gowarvati and Poguli dialects near Kashmere; that the Assamese word জোন (moon) is to be found in the Kauthala, Khaskura and the Kashmiri; that the Assamese word জুই (fire) is to be found in the Avestic languages and the Assames Ablative case-ending পৰা is similar to the Avestic and Icelandic "frā" and the Gowarvati পেৰে; that the Assamese plural endings বিনাক and বোৰ are the same as Gowarvati গিলা \* and Pasai বো, we do not mean that people from these far off places came to Assam directly and settled there. What we mean is that these various dialects are the remnants of an Aryan language that was brought to India before the advent of the Vedic Aryan and Vedic Sanskrit. Many words and grammatical forms of this older language—nay even peculiar pronunciations—have been preserved in some of the modern Aryan languages of India. The retention of the Alveolars in place of the cerebrals and the Dentals and the persistence of the Guttural spirant (the silent h) are true Aryan characteristics which Assamese has preserved in this corner of India. This could be possible because the first Aryan settlers of Assam (the Kalitas) were not the speakers of classical Sanskrit and the medieval Indian *Prākṛit* which abound in Cerebrals and Palatals but lost the Guttural spirant.

We refuse to believe that the last word has been said on Indian Philology and that more critical study of the languages

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\* In the modern Kamrup district dialect the word is গিলা. Dr. Binikanta Kakati however claims that these Assamese plural endings have an Austric origin—(Ed. J. A. R. S.)

will not reveal facts which may not be consistant with the dogmas and ideas so far tentatively accepted. \*

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\* As very correctly anticipated by Dr. S. K. Chatterji in his Presidential Address, in the Indo-Aryan Languages section of the Eighth All-India Oriental Conference of 1935, "the growing science of Anthropology" has already brought many pet theories in regard to racial and linguistic origins into the melting pot. (Ed. J. A. R. S.)

## LUI-PADA AND MATSYENDRA NĀTH.

( BY R. M. NATH, B.E., A.E.S. )

There has been an endeavour amongst a certain section of scholars to identify Luipāla, the Buddhist-Tantric Siddhā, with Matsyendra Nāth, the renowned Nāth-Siddhā. The conclusion however, does not appear to be final, and a lot is said for and against the theory.

Some of the arguments that are put forward in support of the theory are :—

(1) Lui-pāda tops the list of the eighty four Siddhās, and Matsyendra Nāth also holds the same position in the lists given in the Hatha-Yogā and Varnana-Ratnākara.

(2) The Tibetan name for Luipāda is Lu-i-pa, Lu-yi-pā, Lui-i-pā, Luhi-pāla, Lohipā or Lohitapāda, and the corresponding Tibetan translations, as given by Dr. P. C. Bagchi, are :—ñā lto pa, ñā'i rgya ma za ba and ñā'i-rgyu lto gsol ba. ñā lto pa is, according to Dr. Bagchi, restituted in Sanskrit as Matsyodarā, and the other two names as Matsyantrāda—(the eater of the intestines of a fish)'. (1)

Dr. Bagchi further interprets Lui=Lohita=Rohita=the king of fish. (2)



(3) The Tibetan picture of Luipāda depicts him with one of his feet in the belly of a fish, and the Newari picture that the Late M. M. H. P. Sastri brought from Nepal, painted Matsyendra Nath with a lot of big Rui-fish round his feet, and with one fish in his hand, from which the Saint was eating its raw entrails (\*). The literal translation of Matsyentrādapā, as stated above is "eater of the raw intestines of a fish, or eater of the raw intestines of a fish with his feet". The late learned Sastri translated the term from the view point of a Bengali—the fish eating race as—"lover of the entrails or the curry prepared out of the entrails of a fish" (4).

(4) Matsyendra Nath is named variously as Matsyendra or Macchindra ( King of fish ) ; Macchagna ( killer of fish ) and Mīna (fish).

(5) According to Pāg-sām-jon-zān (Dpag bsam-ljon-bzans) Luipāda was a Buddhist sage of Oddiyana, and he was the disciple of Savaripā. In his young age, he was named Sāmanta-Sobhā, and was the clerk in the court of the king of Oddiyana. According to Grub To'b and Kah bab Dondan (Bka-ababs bdun Idan), as pointed out by Prof. G. Tucci, Mīna Nath was the son of a fisherman of Kamrup (5). P. Cordier calls Luipāda a Bengali.

According to the Skanda Puranam, (Chap. 263—stanzas 43-62), Matsyendra Nath was extracted out of the belly of a big fish (Mahā-Matsya), in a town in the Kshiroda Sāgar (Ocean of Milk) where he had been dropped immediately after his birth by his Brahman father.

Again, Kaulajñāna Nirṇaya, a book on Buddhist-Tantric, cult written in corrupt Sanskrit, is said to have been revealed

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(3) Presidential Address by H. P. Sastri in Bengali—Literary Association, Calcutta on 11-3-29 B. S., also Bagchi, Preface page 24.

(4) Presidential address by H. P. Sastri—Ibid.

(5) Early History of Kamrup by K. L. Barua, page 158.

by Matsyendranath. In it (Ch. 16, sloka 12), Matsyendra Nath who is identified with Śiva or Bhairava is said to have taken to the profession of a fisherman.

The arguments against the theory are :—

(1) It is a matter of grave doubt if the Siddhās or saints were named with reference to their castes of origin or to their habit or profession. The Tibetan picture of Kukkuripāda has got a dog by the side of the Siddhā. It does not mean that the feet of the Siddhā were like those of a dog, or he worshipped the feet of a dog or he ate its flesh.

As a matter of fact, the late M. M. H. P. Sastri thought that these pictures were purely the works of the artist's imagination with reference to the literal meaning of the names of the Siddhas.

Apprehending the danger of misconstruing the names, in the case of Hādī-pā, the author of *Maynā-Matir Gān* had to cry aloud to guard the Siddha, by stating "*Hādī nahe, Hādī nahe Hādīpā Jālandhar*"—he is not a sweeper by caste, he is not a sweeper by caste, his name only is Hādīpā alias Jālandharipā. The latter name was given to him on account of his long residence in Jalandhar (6).

As a matter of fact, it is never a custom with Nath-Siddhas to disclose their past identity. Even in recent years Gambhir-Nath, the great Nath-Siddha of Gorakhpur (died 21st March, 1917) never disclosed to which community or place he originally belonged inspite of repeated requests by many of his educated disciples (7).

(2) According to the Skanda Puranam, Matsyendra Nath was born as the son of a Brahman, but immediately after his

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(6) Journal of Asiatic Society Bengal, 1898 Pt. I page 20.

(7) Yogiraj-Gambhir Nath-Prasanga, by A. K. Bannerjee, M.A. p. 76.

birth, he was thrown into the ocean, just as Mihir, the son of Vāraha, one of the nine jewels of Vikramāditya was thrown into the ocean by his son because of alleged astrological bad omens. He was however, rescued by Śiva and at last emerged to the public as a great Siddha, versed in Yoga. Lui-Pada, on the other hand, has a past history, of serving in a king's court till he became a Siddha, being initiated by Savaripāda (hill-man sage).

(3) To connect Lui or Luhita with the Rohita fish, seems to be a great stress of imagination. Lui or Luhita is a well-known great river flowing through Kamrup, and the road from Sadiya to the Chinese border is known till this day as the Lohita Valley road. Lohita-pāda is therefore, the name of the Siddha who hailed from the Lohita country, as Jalandhari-pada was the Siddha hailing from the Jalandhar country.

Oddiyana was a counterpart of Lanka which again was situated near Zahor. Lanka is definitely in the Nowgong district near Kamrup, and Oddiyana has been identified with Ojai or Hojai in the same district, while Zahor has been identified with Sabour in the Jantia Hills district<sup>(8)</sup>.

At a time, a great portion of modern Bengal, was included within Kamrup, and P. Cordier's surmise that Luipada was a man of Bengal stands to reason.

Indrabhuti, in whose court Luipāda worked, was therefore Indrapāla, the Kamrup king who ruled from 1030-1055 A. D. His son Padma Sambhava, became a Siddha, and is now worshipped as a god in the court temple of Sikim.

(4) Kaulajñāna Nirṇaya is said to have been revealed by Matsyendra Nath and not written by him, and Dr. Bagchi himself admits—"the present account was compiled much later

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(8) Journal of the Assam Research Society, April-July, 1937. pp. 48-57.

than the times of Matsyendra Nath". The late M. M. H. P. Sastri who thought that the book was actually written by Matsyendra Nath made a very stringent remark on the merit of the composition stating that the son of a Brahman, howsoever uneducated he was, could never write such bastard Sanskrit, the composition emerged from the pen of Matsyendra Nath, a fisherman as he was by caste <sup>(9)</sup>. The learned scholar however, discovered his mistake later on and found to his amazement that all the works of the Buddhist-Tantric period were written in a "peculiar kind of Sanskrit which would be accessible to all initiates even without any preparation in grammar" <sup>(10)</sup>.

Naths never ascribe the authorship of any book to Matsyendra Nath. His teachings were embodied in a book written by Goraksha Nath, his disciple, and that book is written in pure Sanskrit. This book deals with Hatha-Yoga and other methods of worship even now common amongst the Naths. Teachings or Luipāda are embodied in his '*Dohās*', preserved in Nepal Library, and Matsyendra Nath is worshipped as an incarnation of Śiva in the temple in Nepal.

(5) The '*Caryāścaryaviniścaya*', as edited by late H. P. Sastri as Baudha-Gān-o-Dohā, begins with obeisance to *Vajrayogini*. Caryas No. 1 and 29 are attributed to Luipada, while in the same book, in the annotation of Caryas No. 21, there is reference to the saying of one Mina-Nath.

(6) In the *Nityāhnikā-Tilakam* as published by Dr. P. C. Bagchi in the preface (page 68) of *Kaulajñāna-Nirnaya*, there is a detailed description of one Matsyendra Nath, who was a man of Bengal. He was originally a Brahman by caste and his name

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(9) Presidential Address on 11-3-1329 B. S. "বইখানি পড়িতে পড়িতে আমার মনে হইল কোনও ব্রাহ্মণের ছেলে যতই মূৰ্খ হউক, একরূপ সংস্কৃত লিখিবে না"।

(10) Descriptive Catalogue of the Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Govt. Collection, A. S. B., page 78.

was Viṣṇu Sarma. After being initiated he was named Maudīśha deva, while his name during worship was Pippalīśha deva. His secret name was Bhairavānanda Nath and his name of repute was Virānanda Nath. Being favoured by Indra, he got the name Indrānanda deva, and while he practised yoga on the banks of the Markata river, he was given the name Matsyendra Nath; his female consort for the purpose of observing rituals was Lalitā-Bhairavi.

It is the custom with the *Kaūlas* to name their disciples with second components such as 'Nath, Deva, and Swami' <sup>(11)</sup>, and after '*Abhiśekha*' or the formal initiation, he should invariably be given a name ending with 'Nath' <sup>(12)</sup>.

'There is indeed very little difference between the Kaulācāra and the Tantric Bauddhācāra, because in both the desire to do improper and illegal things, in the fullest extent, is present <sup>(12a)</sup>. The fundamental theory of the *Kaūla* is—'a *yogin* forsakes pleasures, and a pleasure-seeker can never be a *yogin*, but a *Kaūla* combines both, hence Kaulaism is the most popular cult. It is Kaulaism that sanctifies pleasure-seeking actions and legalises sinful performances' <sup>(13)</sup>.

The *Kaūla* cult appears to be a compromise between the debased Buddhism and Tantricism, while Nathism is a compromise between pure Buddhism and Hinduism with Śaivism as the predominating factor.]

(7) It appears that in later times many Naths were initiated into Kaulism and Buddhist-Tāntricism, and they carried the

(11) "भीमायदेव स्वामीति विवादे साधने वदेत्"—Kularnavam—9th ch. Edited by Rasik Mohan Chatterjee, Manikganj, Dacca.

(12) Vide 'Guru-Pradīpa'—by Sacchidananda Saraswati, page 73.

(12a) Vide Sādhana Mālā by Dr. B. T. Bhattacharyya, pt. I preface.

(18) "योगी चेन्नैव भोगी स्यात् चेन्नैव योगवित् ।

भोगयोगात्मकं कौलं तस्मात् सर्वाधिकः प्रिये ॥

भोगो योगायतै साक्षात् पातकं सूक्ष्मायते ।

मोक्षायते च संसारः कुलधर्मः कुलेभ्यः ॥" Kularnavam—2nd ch.

traditions of the Siddhas of their former faith into their new atmosphere. In the Prithwirāj Rāsu, written by the Court poet of Prithwi-raj, we find mention of Nath Goraksha whose spirit came down to take away Alha while Udal was killed by Prithwiraj in the battlefield. This was sometime in 1150 A.D. and Lama Taranath speaks of one Buddhist *yogin* Goraksha whose followers became Śaivite Sannyasins in or about 1203 A. D. This Goraksha had got different names—Ananga Vajra and Raman Vajra<sup>(14)</sup>. We have already mentioned one *Kaūla* Matsyendra Nath having a consort to help him in his Tāntric observances.

(8) Nath Goraksha was a Hatha-Yogin and his teachings are embodied in Goraksha-Sambhita, edited now by Pandit Prasanna Kumar Kaviratna. The renegade Buddhist Goraksha Nath also wrote a Goraksha Sambhita. This book is now preserved in the Nepal Durbar library. From the portion of the book as published by Dr. P. C. Bagchi in the preface (pages 64-67) of Kaulajnan Nirnaya it appears that the book is purely a *Kaūla* text and has absolutely nothing in common with Nath-Goraksha's book. Unfortunately Dr. Bagchi could not see Kaviratna's book and wrongly surmised that what he found in Nepal was the Nath Goraksha's book.

Similarly, the *Goraksha-Sahasranāma-stotram* found by Dr. Bagchi in Nepal is different in essence and spirit from the book of the same name prevalent amongst the Naths of India<sup>(15)</sup>.

(9) Matsyendra Nath was a Hatha Yogin and he introduced several '*Asans*', and preached austere physical penances to control nerves and passions to train the mind for meditation. His mode of meditation was to concentrate the mind in

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(14) Vide Banddha-Gān-O-Dohā, by H. P. Sastri, preface page 16. & J.A.S.B., pt. I 1898, page 20.

(15) Vide Muktasram—pt. II by late Vishnu Nath of Bardwan.

the region above the nose and between the eye-brows when the Cosmic sound (*Nāḍ*) would be heard and the *Vindu* or the bright dot would be seen. This would lead the mind to merge with the Cosmic sound, when nothing but selfless Atman would remain and the Para-Brahman would be realised (<sup>16</sup>). Matsyendra Nath would advocate, as a means to his end, such difficult physical practices as *Oddiyāna-Bandha*, *Jalandhar-Bandha*, *Maha Bandha* etc (<sup>17</sup>), but Lui-pada, as far as we can make out from his *Caryās*, was very much against physical austerities. By mortification of flesh, he thought, one would simply punish the self and make the nerves unfit for enjoyment of real pleasure (<sup>18</sup>), and he strictly preached against such difficult practices as *Bandhas* (<sup>19</sup>). Such injunctions found favourable acceptance amongst the *Kūalas*. It is stated in the *Kulārnavam* that it is only the fools who want to attain salvation by fasting and mortifying the flesh. It is only the idiots who want to attain Siddhi by punishing the body, for who can kill a snake by beating on an ant-hill ? (<sup>20</sup>).

(10) A *Nath* till this day is an ardent worshipper of *Nāḍ* and *Vindu*, he meditates on the apex of the triangular pyramid conceived at the junction of *Ida*, *Pingalā* and *Suśumnā*, the three main nerves ; and Goraksha Nath's popularity is due mainly to the introduction of a simple method intelligible even to a fool (<sup>21</sup>) of meditating on the *Nāḍ* and *Vindu*. The left-

(16) Vide *Hatha-Pradipika*, by Brajendra Vidyaratna, page 100, and *Goraksha Samhita* by Kaviratna—pt. IV pp. 192—194.

(17) महाबन्धं समासाद्य ऊर्ध्वं कूर्मकं चरेत् । महावेधं समाख्यातो योगिनां सिद्धिदायकः—गोरक्ष संहिता ।

(18) “म अल मग्राश्चि काश्चि करि अहे ।  
सुखं हृत्तेतें निष्ठितं मरि अहे ॥”—*Carya* No. 1.

(19) “एडि एउ हान्क वारु करणक पांटेर आं” —*Ibid*.

(20) देहदण्डन मात्रेण का सिद्धिरपिबेकिनाम् ।

बल्मीक ताड़नादेवि मृतः कोहत्र महोरगः ॥ ” — 1st ch.

(21) Vide *Hatha-Pradipika*—4th part, page 65.

sided nerve *Idā* is called the lunar nerve and the right hand *Pingalā* is called the solar nerve and the central nerve that penetrates axially through the junction of the first two nerves is called *Suśumnā*. A *Nath* assumes the existence of a bright region, as bright as the moon, above the junction<sup>(22)</sup>. When the mind is concentrated in that region, a *Nath* forgets who is a Guru and who is a disciple, he becomes Śiva himself, and is merged with Para-Brahman<sup>(22a)</sup>.

Luipāda was an ardent preacher of implicit obedience to and complete reliance on his Guru—it is only the Guru who can do everything. He meditates on his Guru and visions his image in the region between eyebrows—the place where Matsyendra-Nath would vision the *Vindu*.—‘ Says Lui, I vision my Guru sitting with folded legs—the left coinciding with *Idā* and the right with *Pingalā*, in the region between the eye brows’<sup>(23)</sup>. Sarahapāda, —another Siddha of Luipada’s school, clearly states that neither *Nāl* nor *Vindu* nor the moon-like bright region will clear the path to an ardent seeker for truth<sup>(24)</sup>. Luipāda’s aim was to attain Mahāsukha, and he can have it only through the mercy of his Guru<sup>(25)</sup>.

This method of assuming the existence of Guru in the region between eyebrows, or *Ajña-cakra* as it is called, is prevalent amongst the *Kailas*<sup>(26)</sup> and Gheranda Samhita mentions this as an alternative course. In later times, the

(22) Goraksha Samhita—4th pt, page 198.

(22 a) গুরুনৰ শিষ্যমিহানন্দ কৃপা শিষ্যোহঃ ।

(23) ভনই লুই আম্‌হে সাণে দিঠা  
ধমণ চমণ বেণি পাণ্ডিবইণ । ” —Carya No. 1.

(24) “ নাদ ন বিন্দু ন রবি ন শশিমণ্ডল ।  
চিঅঅরাঅ সহাবে মুকল । ” —Carya No. 32.

(25) “ দিট করিঅ মহা স্নহ পরিমাণ ।  
লুই ভণই গুক পুচ্ছিল জান ॥ ” —Carya No. 1.

(26) Vide ‘Puja-Pradipa’—by Sacchidanand Saraswati (Calcutta) pt. II, pp. 80-81.



same theory was further developed, and Viswasāra Tantra and Kaulamālini Tantra introduced the Guru's consort by his side in the same region (27).

(11) It therefore, appears that there is a doctrinal disagreement between Luipāda and Matsyendra Nath, and hence they were quite different persons. It further appears that Matsyendra Nath flourished before Luipāda.

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(27) Vide Gheranda Samhita—edited by Kaliprasanna Vidyaratna—pp. 99-100.

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## WERE THERE INDIAN COLONISTS FROM ASSAM IN INDO-CHINA ?

(BY. K. L. BARUA.)

From the earliest times successive hordes of people from Tibet, Burma, Yunnan, Indo-China and other eastern countries had entered India through Assam by the land-routes through Bhutan, the Aka, Duffla, Abor and Mishmi countries, the Hukong Valley and the Valley of Manipur. The earliest immigrants were perhaps the Austro-Asiatic speaking Khasis and Syntengs who must have entered Assam many centuries before the coming of the Tibeto-Burmans and the latest were the Burmese plundering parties which had to be expelled by British forces during the Viceroyalty of Lord Amherst in 1826 A. D. Early in the thirteenth century a tribe of the Shans from the kingdom of Pong, led by an adventurer named Sukāpha, entered the eastern Assam valley and laid the foundations of the powerful Ahom kingdom which was officially known as Saumara till the

end of the seventeenth century \* but which the Muslim chroniclers, accompanying the Moghul expeditionary forces, called Assam after the name of the ruling people—the Āhoms. There is no doubt abundant evidence of these immigrations of non-Indians into India by the land-routes mentioned above but is there any reliable evidence of Indian emigration, through the same routes, to Burma or Indo-China ?

As early as 1883 Sir Arthur Playre pointed out the probability of Indians founding colonies in Burma and Indo-China and relying on his authority Sir Edward Gait, in his "History of Assam" stated that "the Indian King Samuda who, according to Forlong, was ruling in upper Burma in 105 A D must have proceeded thither through Assam and so must the Hindus who led the Tchampas or Shans in their conquest of the of the mouths of the Mekong in 280 A. D." (1) In 1904 Peliott wrote that at least from the second century B.C a regular trade-route by land existed between Eastern India and China through upper Burma and Yunan. According to Dr R. C. Majumdar the twenty Buddhist priests from Szchuen, mentioned by I-Tsing, came to India by this route during the time of Maharaja Śri Gupta about the end of the third century A.D. (2) Dr Majumdar states that through this route Indians emigrated and founded colonies not only in upper Burma but also in the upper valleys of the Irawaddy, the Salween, the Mekong and the Red river. There was a Hindu Kingdom in Yunan known as Nanchao which, according to local traditions, was founded by a great-grandson of Aśoka.

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\* In his coin minted in Saka 1619 (1697 A. D.) Maharaja Rudra Simha, the most powerful of the Ahom kings, described himself as *Saumārevara* and all Ahom coins were of octagonal shape as the kingdom *Saumāra* was octagonal according to the *Yoginī Tantra*. (*Aṣṭa Konaṇca Saumāra Yatra Dikkara Vāsini*.)— K.L.B.

(1) Gaits "History of Assam," Second edition, p. 9.

(2) Majumdar's "Ancient Indian Colonies in the far East," Vol. I, Champā p. X III (Introduction).

Between Nanchao and the Indian frontier and to the east of the Patkoi range was the Brahman kingdom of Ta-tisin and beyond the Chindwin river was another Brahman kingdom.<sup>(3)</sup> The Indians established kingdoms also at Prome, Tagaung and Lower Pagan besides Laos (known as Mālava), Cambodia (Kamboja) and Annam (Champa). Col Gerini writes as follows:—

“From the Brahmaputra and Manipur ~~to the~~ <sup>to the</sup> Tokin gulf we trace a continuous string of petty states ruled by scions of the Khattriya race using the Sanskrit or the Pali languages in official documents after the Indu style and employing Brahman priests for the propitiatory ceremonies connected with the Court and State. Among such Indu monarchs we may mention those of Tagong, upper Pagan and Senwi in Burma, of Muang-Hong, Chieng, Rung, Muang khwan and Daśarna (Luang Phrah Bang) in the Lao country and of Agranagara (Hanoi) and Champa in Tokin and Anuam”<sup>(4)</sup>.

There were actually two streams of emigration from India, one proceeding from the north overland through Bengal and Assam, along the valleys of the Chindwin, the Irrawaddy, the Salween and the Mekong while the other reached Indo-China by sea across the Bay of Bengal. The latter route was availed of by Indians from the coasts of Southern India, and also from Lower Bengal. The overland route passed through Assam and it stands to reason therefore that just as Assam received successive hordes of immigrants from Burma and Indo-China, from time to time, through this route she must have also sent out her own sons (Hindu priests and warriors as correctly put by Gait) by the same route. There are no doubt at present whole villages of Assamese settlers in upper Burma but they are the decendants of Assamese prisoners carried off by the Burmese

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(3) Ibid.

(4) Col. Gerini's "Researches on Ptolemy's Geography" pp. 122-123.

invaders more than 100 Years ago. Let us see whether there is evidence of earlier migrations from Assam.

According to Cambodian annals as well as a Chinese history compiled about the sixth century A. D. the kingdom of Kamboja (Founan) which comprised modern Cochin China, Cambodia and parts of Siam and Laos was founded by an Indian adventurer prior to the third century A. D. This has been confirmed by epigraphic evidence. The My-son inscription of King Prakāśa-dharma-Vikranta Varman, dated Śaka 579 (657 A. D.), records that the founder of the kingdom was a Brahman called Kaundinya (*Tatra sthāpita bācchulam kaundinyastad dvijarṣavah*). It is now claimed by some that this Brahman named Kaundinya hailed from Southern India and that he sailed for Indo-China from the Kalinga coast. It may however be pointed out that Kundina was the name of the place where Bhismak, the father of Rukmini, is said to have ruled and, rightly or wrongly, the extensive ruins near Sadiya and close by the river Kundin or Kundil are, to this day, pointed out as the ancient city of Kundin. This has been pointed out not only by Gait<sup>(5)</sup> but also by Pandit Vidyavinod in his *Kamarūpa Śāsanāvali* wherein it is further stated that according to tradition a colony of Brahmans was settled at this place by Paraśurama<sup>(6)</sup>. Can it not therefore be claimed that Kaundinya, the reputed founder of the kingdom of Kamboja belonged to this Brahman colony of Kundin and that he was called Kaundinya as he originally belonged to Kundin ?

On the other hand, it may also be pointed out that Kaundinya was the name a *gotra* of the Nagar-Brahmans.\*

(5) Gait's History of Assam pp. 15-16

(6) *Kamarūpa Śāsanāvali* p. 27 (Introduction).

\* The *Aṣṭakula Nāgara* Brahmans are mentioned as follows in the *Nāgara khaṇḍa* of the *Skanda Purāṇa* :—

“ *Kasyapaśaiba Kaundinya Ukṣāśah Śārkavo Dviśah.*

According to the *Nāgarotpatti* Kaundinya is one of the 72 *gotras* of the Nagar-Brahmans. Of the 33 *gotras* of Nagar-Brahmans mentioned in the *Nāgara Puṣpāñjali* Kaundinya is one. According to Pracyavidyarnava N. N. Basu Kaundinya, and Kaundinya-Kauśika are among the *gotras* of Vaidik Brahmans of Bengal, Sylhet and Kāmarūpa.<sup>(7)</sup> Judged by their surnames most of the donees of the land-grant of Mahabhūta Varman of Kamarupa of the fifth century A. D. were Nagar-Brahmans and some of them belonged to the Kaundinya *gotra*. It is therefore a patent fact that Nagar-Brahmans were numerous and influential in Assam during the early centuries of the Christian era. The settlement of a colony of these Brahmans near the Kundin river in upper Assam in early days can not therefore be regarded as improbable nor can we reject as impossible the theory that a Brahman from Assam, belonging to the Kaundinya *gotra*, was the adventurer who founded the Kāmboja kingdom in far off Indo-China. The Brahman kingdoms of Ta-tsin and the Chindwin Valley, mentioned by Dr. Majumdar may have been similarly founded by Brahmans proceeding from Assam.

Again Annam (ancient Champa) was, it appears, under a Hindu or Hinduized dynasty as early as the second century A.D. It is recorded in the Vo-Chanh rock-inscription in Sanskrit, which has been referred to the second century, on palaeographic grounds, that a King belonging to the *Srimāra* royal family was ruling over the Chams about that time (*Sri mārā rāja kula Vamsa-abibhuṣanena Sri mārā loka nripateḥ kula nandanena*).<sup>(8)</sup> It is not quite clear what *Sri mārā* meant. It

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Vaijabāpacaiba Saṣṭhaḥ Kāpisthalo Dvikaṣṭathā

Etad Kulāṣṭakam prāptamindrena saha pārthivah "

These *Aṣṭakulas* were regarded as the most respectable of the Nāgar-Brahmans.

(7) Social History Kāmarūpa Vol. III pp. 142-144.

(8) The letters of the inscription are indistinct and the text quoted above is restored reading suggested by Finot.—K. L. B.

is not likely that it was the name of a person. On the other hand the restored reading, suggested by Finot, may not be correct and the word *Saumāra* or *Šaumāra* may have been read as *Śri māra*. *Saumāra rājakula* would have an appropriate meaning for, as already mentioned in the beginning of this article, *Saumāra* was the name of the easternmost division of *Kāmarūpa*. Thus, as already supposed by Gait, the Hindu warriors who led the Chams or the Tchampas against the Chinese in the third century originally proceeded not only through upper Assam or *Saumāra* but very likely from *Saumāra* itself. Referring to verses 636--640 of the *Manjusri Mulakalpa* in which mention is made of the Indian Archipelago and Further India, Jayaswal supposes that Kings of the " *Kāmarūpa kula*" (of the family of the kings of *Kamarūpa* ) were ruling in these countries very early<sup>(9)</sup>. Writing about the Bhauma dynasty of *Kamarūpa* Prachyavidyarnava N. N. Basu has the following in the third volume of his Social History of *Kamarūpa* :—

"Just as Samudra Gupta founded an empire which included at least the whole of the Indian sub-continent, Samudra Varma (of the Bhauma dynasty) extended his powers to the eastern peninsula the shores of which were washed by the Pacific ocean. Thus the influence of the Bhauma dynasty had made itself felt in distant Burma before it began to spread in Eastern India. The origin of the grand architectural memorials of the Śaivas which still exist in Kamboja or Cambodia and Maha-Champa or Annam should be traced to the Brahmanic ascendancy which was firmly established by the Śaiva kings of the Bhauma dynasty."

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(9) Imperial History of India p. 32. The substance of the verse in the *Manjusri Mulakalpa* is as follows. —" The Traigunya will be in the Mleccha countries all around. In the bays of the sea and on their coasts (*ambodheh Kuksitirāntāh*) as well as in the Valleys of the snowy mountains ( *Himādri* ) there will be kings of the *Kāmarūpa-Kula*." The " countries on the bays of the sea and their coasts " are taken by Mr. Jayaswal to mean the Indian Archipelago and Further India—K.L.B.

In the same book the author has suggested that, as stated by Yuan Chwang, the Bhauma kings of Kāmarūpa were themselves Brahmans (Nagar-Brahmans) who were also staunch Śaivites. It thus appears that the kings of the "Kamarūpa kula" (Dynasty of Kamarūpa) as mentioned in the *Manjusri Mulakalpa* were Brahmans as well as Śaivites like the Brahman kings of Kamboja, Tu-Tsin and the Chindwin Valley. The matter is extremely interesting but further researches are necessary and I would invite discussion by scholars who have made a closer study of the history of Indian colonization in Burma, Indo-China and the Islands of the Indian Archipelago. If what I have tentatively suggested above comes to be true then it would appear that the Alpines, as represented originally by their priests, the Nagar-Brahmans, were the first torch-bearers of culture and civilization not only in Eastern India but also in Burma and Indo-China and that the phrases "Aryans" and "scions of the Khatriya race" as applied to them by Dr. Majumdar and Col Gorini respectively must be regarded as terminological inaccuracies.

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## A CORRECTION.

(BY THE EDITOR.)

With reference to our addendum to the contribution of Mr. Das Gupta on "Kāmarūpa and Kauṭilya", published in the last issue of this Journal, an esteemed friend has pointed out to us that *rūpya*, in the *Arthaśāstra* did not refer to the ore from which silver was obtained but to the extracted and wrought silver and that hence the variety called Gaullikam, which according to the commentator Bhattarvamin, was a product of Kāmarūpa, (*Gaullikam Kāmarūpajam Tagara puspāvam*) must have been a variety of

wrought silver which was well known during Kauṭilyas time. We must admit that this seems to be a reasonable interpretation. It is thus indicated that about that time there were expert metallurgists in Kāmarūpa who could extract silver from ore and produce wrought silver of the colour of the *Tagara* flower or almost as white and pure as modern hall-mark silver. This silver was no doubt used for minting coins and making ornaments and utensils. Mr. Ernest Mackay states in his book, 'The Indus Civilization', that much if not all the silver used in the prehistoric towns of the Indus Valley was procured from lead-ore as the process of extraction, must have been known to the ancients. He suggests that argentiferous lead-ore, may have been obtained from Afghanistan by the caravan route but perhaps such ore could have been obtained also from an eastern source nearer to Assam.

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## REVIEWS.

### PERIODICALS.

Ka Syngkhong Jingtip, July and October 1938, Vol. II Numbers 2 and 3—This is the Khasi Cultural Journal written in Khasi as well as English, edited by Mr. Theodore Cajee, B.L. The English portion contains an article on the "Contact of Peoples" by Mr. David Roy, Extra Assistant Commissioner, who is a frequent contributor to the "Man in India" on the racial and cultural history of the Khasis of Assam. Mr. Roy's article is followed by an appreciative note by the Rev. Brother J. I. O'Leary, M.A. of the St. Edmunds College, Shillong. It is indeed a credit to the small Khasi community that they have been able to run a periodical like this without depending on any financial support from the Provincial Government.

Indian Historical Quarterly, Vol. XIV, No. 4 (December 1938)—This issue contains a contribution by Bisweswar Chakravarti on "King Harṣadeva of the Nepal Inscription" in which the writer has attempted to refute the identification, so long accepted by all scholars of note, of king Śrī Harṣa Deva, mentioned in the Nepal inscription, with king Śrī Harṣa Varma Deva of Kāmarūpa. This inscription was incised in 748 or 759 A.D. by order of king Jayadeva of Nepal who had the good fortune of marrying Rājyamati "the noble descendant of Bhagadatta's royal line and daughter of Śrī Harṣa Deva, lord of Gauḍa, Odra, Kāliṅga, Kośala and other lands, who crushed the heads of hostile kings with the club-like tusks of his rutting elephants." (Indian Antiquary Vol. IX p 181).

Mr. Chakravarti advances the following arguments in support of his views :—

(a) Harṣa Varma mentioned in the Hayungthal grant of Harjjaravarman belonged to the dynasty of Śālastambha which was a *mlechha* and not a *Bhauma* dynasty.

(b) Śrī Hariṣa mentioned in the grant of Vanamāla also belonged to the dynasty of Śālastambha. Besides, though the kings of Kāmarūpa were always known as "Prāḡjyotiṣa" there is no mention of either Kāmarūpa or Prāḡjyotiṣa in the Nepal inscription.

(c) Besides the kings of Kāmarūpa the Bhauma—Kara kings of Orissa also claimed descent from Naraka and called themselves *Bhumānvaya*. Śrī Harṣa Deva mentioned in the Nepal inscription may have belonged to this Orissa dynasty which may have been originated by the successors of Bhaskaravarman.

As to the first argument it may be pointed out that the *Kāmarūpa Śāśanāvali* contains the full texts of at least two complete charters of two kings of the alleged *mlechha* dynasty viz. Vanamāla and Balavarman and in both the ancestry of the kings have been traced from Naraka and Bhagadatta. There were some dynasties of kings in India who claimed descent from the Sun or the Moon. A historian is not concerned with the biological possibility of such descent but he has to take cognizance of the fact of such a claim. It appears that the kings of the Śālastambha dynasty, like their predecessors of the Puṣya-varman dynasty and also like their successors of the Brahmapāla dynasty, claimed descent from Bhagadatta. In his inscription the Nepal king Jayadeva described his queen Rājyamati as *Bhagadattā rājakulajā* because his father-in-law Śrī Harṣa Deva, king of Kāmarūpa, claimed descent from Bhagadatta. In the face of such a claim how can one say that Rājyamati could not have been the daughter of the Kāmarūpa king Śrī Harṣa Varma Deva because that king may have actually belonged to a *mlechha*

dynasty as stated in the inscription of Brahmapāla, an upstart who came to occupy the throne of Kāmarupa some centuries later?

The second argument is equally untenable. Jayadeva mentioned in his inscription the various countries which his father-in-law acquired by conquest and over which he became the lord. These countries were Gauḍa, Odra, Kalinga, Kośala and others. It is not understood why Kāmarupa, his own ancestral kingdom, should be mentioned in this connection.

Mr. Chakravarti supposes that on the death of Bhāskara-varman his vast empire fell to pieces and his descendants were deprived of the ancestral throne. Being driven out of Kāmarupa they held temporary sway over Gauḍa etc. and "through various changes of fortune they maintained their independence in the hilly tracts of Orissa". It is therefore assumed that Śrī Harṣa Deva as well as the Bhauma-Kara kings of Orissa originated from the Orissa branch of the descendants of Bhaṣkara Varman. On the other hand the well-known scholar, Rai Bahadur Rama Prasad Chanda, supposes that after conquering Odra (Orissa) the Kāmarūpa king Śrī Harṣa Varma Deva placed his relative Khemaṅkara on the throne of Orissa and that is how a Bhauma dynasty originated in Orissa. This is a much more natural explanation than the one suggested by Chakravarti. As Subhakara Deva sent the embassy to China in 795 A.D, his grandfather Khemankara, the founder of the family, can be assigned to the middle of the eighth century and that is about the time supposed for Śrī Harṣa Deva of Kāmarūpa. If Śrī Harṣa Deva had really been a scion of the Orissa family, kings like Subhakara Deva of that family would have surely mentioned the name of such a powerful conqueror but can Mr. Chakravarti find any such mention in any of the grants of the Bhauma-Kara family? If not why put up a theory based upon nothing but imagination? Mr. Chakravarti may not mind the occupation of Bengal by an Orissan king but he

may not like to admit such occupation by a king from Kāmarūpa, but historical truth, however unpalatable, has got to be accepted. Has Mr. Chakravarti overlooked the excellent contribution of a noted Bengali scholar on the "Occupation of Bengal by the Kings of Kāmarupa" published in the Indian Culture (Vol. II pp. 37-45) ?

Indian Historical Quarterly, Vol. XV No. I, March 1939—

This issue contains an article on the "Political condition of Bengal during Hiuen Tsang's visit" contributed by Mr. D. C. Ganguli who has come to the conclusion that in 642 A. D, when Bhāskaravarman, accompanied by Hinen Tsang, met Śri Harṣa at Kajangala, Gaṇḍa formed a part of the dominions of Bhāskaravarman and that the evidence furnished by the Nidhanpur inscription and the *Life of Hiuen Tsang* leads one to the conclusion that Bhāskaravarman was in possession of not only Gaṇḍa but also of northern Radha at this period. This exactly is the view put forward in the "Early History of Kāmarūpa" more than six years ago. Evidently Mr. Ganguli, unlike Mr. Chakravarti, is free from prejudice.

New Asia, Vol. I, Nos. 1 & 2—This is a new Journal devoted to oriental culture and thought throughout Asia. The first issue publishes contributions from the pen of Prof. Tucci, Dr. P. C. Bagchi and Dr. Kalidas Nag and the second issue contains contributions from Dr. Berymann and Dr. Vajra Chatterji. An Assamese lady, Miss Durgavati Saikia B.A., also has an article in this issue on "Assam's contribution to Literature." This is mainly a cultural magazine which deals also with Asiatic politics.

The Journal of the Indian Anthropological Institute, Vol. I Nos. 1 & 2, 1938—This is the organ of the Institute and it is published by the University of Calcutta, the Editor being Dr. B. S. Guha, the wellknown Anthropologist. Assam is represented in the Institute by Mr. J. P. Mills, who is one of the

Vice-Presidents and by the Editor of this Journal who is a member of the Council. The first elected President of the Institute—Dr. J. H. Hutton—also hailed from Assam. His Presidential address on the “Future of Anthropology in India” has been published in this Journal which contains an interesting contribution by Mr. K. P. Chattopadhyay on “Indian Oil presses and oil extraction.” In this article the writer points out that a primitive type of oil-press, which was in use throughout Northern India in ancient times and which reached even Nepal along with an earlier culture-stream, survives in Assam, Chota Nagpur and Nepal which are “safety pockets” of culture. In Nepal the oil-presser Salmi is still a pure caste and by reference to Montgomery Martin, who wrote 100 years ago, Mr. Chattopadhyay points out that in Assam “oilmen are of all castes.” He thus notices a cultural parallel between Assam and Nepal, the two “safety pockets”, which are out-of-the-way places where cultural traits submerged elsewhere still survive. As a further example he refers to the practice of the Assam Brahmans who accept a bride-price and says that this practice, once prevalent in Bengal but now restricted there “to the inferior sub-castes of Brahmans and the artisans” has been submerged by a more orthodox Brahmanic culture. It should be pointed out however that in the Assam Valley there is a separate functional group, known as *teli*, who press oil for sale or barter but men of all castes can press their own oilseeds in a mill maintained by the village in order to get oil for their own use without degrading themselves in the social scale. The stigma attaches not to the pressing of the oil but to the sale or barter of the oil. All Brahmans of the Assam Valley do not demand a bride-price ; the custom is restricted to the Kamrup district only. In Bengal, since the introduction of *Kulinism*, the position has been reversed and a bridegroom-price is demanded. Opinions may differ as to which custom is more beneficial to society.



## NOTICE.

### KĀMARŪPA ANUSANDHAN SAMITI, GAUHATI.

The Kāmarūpa Anusandhan Samiti or the Assam Research Society has a collection of old historical relics, such as inscribed stones and images cannons, cannon-balls, swords, potteries *puthis* royal costumes coins etc. The premises of the Samiti, situated on the southern bank of Dighali Tank, Gauhati, remains open from 7-30 to 9-30 A.M. and 3 to 7 P.M. on working days ; from 3 to 7 P.M. on Sundays and on Doljatra, Lakshmipuja, and the anniversaries of Damodar Deb, Sankar Deb, and Madhab Deb. The Samiti remains closed on the following occasion :—Sri-panchami, Māghbihu, Bahāgbihu, Id-duz-zaha, Maharam, Janmāstami, Durgāpujā, Kalipujā, Christmas Eve, New Year's Day, King-Emperor's Birth-day and Sivaratri.

Information which may lead to the recovery of any historic relic or article will be thankfully received.

**D. GOSWAMI.**

*Honorary Secretary,*

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